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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 USNATO 000490

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR, DIPLOMATIC SECURITY, AND EUR/RPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/30/2019

TAGS: [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PROP](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [RS](#) [CH](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: NATO SPECIAL COMMITTEE ISSUES: WORK PLAN,
INTELLIGENCE REFORM, AND THE CHINESE INTELLIGENCE THREAT

REF: A. PO(2009)0148

[1](#)B. PO(98)101

[1](#)C. PO(2009)0147

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Classified By: D/PolAd Alejandro "Hoot" Baez. Reasons: 1.4 (b), (c), and (d).

[1](#)1. (S/REL NATO) SUMMARY: At the October 28 meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC), Allies were briefed on the draft 2010 Work Plan for the NATO Special Committee. The Special Committee serves as an advisory body on espionage and terrorist-related matters. The incoming Chair of the Committee said that the Committee was an important link for NATO to the civilian intelligence services of member nations, but that it had not changed to keep up with the recent transformations seen elsewhere in the Alliance. He said the Committee needed guidance from the NAC on the types of information and advice it wanted from the Committee. Allies differed over whether the Special Committee should focus its efforts only on traditional subjects, such as the threat to NATO from Russian intelligence services, or should expand its reach to look at issues such as the threat to NATO forces in Afghanistan from Al Qaeda. The French PermRep argued that the Special Committee should not engage in an assessment of the threat from Russian security services, stating that these proposed topics appeared to have been drafted with a "Cold War" viewpoint -- despite the fact that NATO recently expelled two Russian diplomats for activities inconsistent with their status. The NAC also discussed the broader issue of NATO intelligence reform, with the UK PermRep arguing for the appointment of an outside civilian to come in and look at the issue with "fresh eyes." The Italian PermRep disagreed, appearing to bristle at the recent proliferation of outside experts being brought in to solve Alliance problems. While welcoming the recently reconstituted NATO Headquarters Intelligence Steering Committee, Ambassador Daalder suggested that it needed a single chair who could bring together both the civilian and military sides of NATO intelligence -- such as the Deputy Secretary General. Allies were also briefed on a Special Committee assessment of the Chinese intelligence threat to NATO and NATO member states. END SUMMARY

[1](#)2. (C/REL NATO) Admiral Branciforte, the head of the Italian External Information and Security Agency and the incoming

chairman of the NATO Special Committee, briefed the October 28 meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on the Committee's draft 2010 Work Plan (ref A -- emailed to EUR/RPM). Per its Terms of Reference (ref B), the Special Committee serves as an advisory body to the Council on matters of espionage and terrorist or related threats which may affect the Alliance.

2010 Special Committee Work Plan...

13. (C/REL NATO) Branciforte said that during its Icelandic chairmanship, the Committee had conducted an internal debate on how to better serve the North Atlantic Council, adding that this was a debate which would continue under the Italian chairmanship. He said that an early draft of the 2010 Work Plan had been released so that the Committee could get political guidance from the NAC, particularly regarding several innovative proposals such as: "on demand" threat assessments, the establishment of a Special Committee Permanent Staff element at NATO Headquarters (to be filled by Voluntary National Contributions), and enhanced ties with the Secretary General's Private Office.

14. (C/REL NATO) Branciforte also said that the Committee needed guidance from the NAC to help it pare down a list of 12 possible "normal" threat assessments to the five that the Committee would produce during 2010. The list of twelve included:

-- Al Qaeda and Taliban capability in Pakistan and its impact on NATO operations in Afghanistan;

-- Afghanistan: Provision of Logistical Support and Know-How

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to ISAF's Adversaries;

-- Threat to NATO Operations in Afghanistan from Iranian Intelligence Services;

-- North Korean's U-turn on NBRC: What will be the Strategic Impact of the North Korean Decision to Enhance their Programme?

-- Al Qaeda Presence in Yemen: Threats and Risks to NATO Countries;

-- Somalia: Impact of the Deterioration of the Security Situation in Somalia on NATO Nations;

-- Kosovo: Links between Organized Crime and Political Figures and Subsequent Risks for KFOR;

-- Modus Operandi of Civilian Cover GRU Officers targeting the Advanced Technology Field and What Types of Advanced Technology they are attempting to Acquire;

-- FSB Overseas Operational Activity using International Counter-Terrorism and Law Enforcement Liaison. Consequent Threats to NATO Countries;

-- Initiatives by Subversive/Antagonist Circles towards NATO Targets;

-- Decision-making Process of Extremist Cells: the Role played by Veterans and Religious Leaders; and

-- The Fight against Imperialism, Militarism, and Security Policies: Shared Battlefronts of the NATO Countries' Antagonist Mobilisation Front.

Leads to Vigorous Allied Discussion...

15. (C/REL NATO) Allied discussion focused on both the

short-term questions at hand, as well as the longer-term reform of the NATO intelligence system. The Secretary General welcomed the idea of "on demand" assessments, although Greece questioned whether these could be done in the three week timeframe envisioned in the Work Plan. Turkey said that it was open to a permanent committee staff, but cautioned that it would need to see the Terms of Reference for the staff element before giving final approval. Italy said that it could support a staff element, but only on the condition that was made up of Voluntary National Contributions.

¶6. (C/REL NATO) Allied differences and concerns were more pointed during the discussion of the proposed "normal" threat assessments for 2010. The Czech Republic said that it felt some of the proposed topics went beyond the remit and expertise of the committee, noting in particular those topics linked to NATO's out-of-area operations. Lithuania made a similar point, pointing out that some of the topics would need to be heavily coordinated with NATO's military intelligence channels. The Czech PermRep also said that he did not believe the list reflected the Alliance intelligence priorities which were set in 2008. Romania said that the topics should be handled consistent with the Special Committee's core expertise: counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism. The UK agreed, arguing that it would be better if the Special Committee focused on topics that played to its strengths. In this regard, the UK said that the proposed assessments of the threat from the Russian FSB and GRU intelligence services were a much better fit for the Special Committee than were the proposed topics on what Al Qaeda was doing in Afghanistan or on the logistics of ISAF's adversaries. The French PermRep took a very different approach, complaining that the proposed assessments on Russia appeared to have been drafted from a "Cold War" viewpoint -- despite the fact that NATO expelled two Russian diplomats earlier this year for activities not consistent with their diplomatic status. Other Allies -- such as Denmark and

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Iceland -- argued for a mix of traditional and newer topics.

Including On NATO Intelligence Reform

¶7. (C/REL NATO) Allies used the opportunity to discuss the need for more far-reaching NATO intelligence reform, with the Netherlands asking how Branciforte saw the division of labor between the Special Committee and other relevant committees such as the Economic Committee. Canada said that the NAC would be best served by a holistic approach to intelligence, which resulted both in a streamlining of the NATO intelligence system and more coordination among the elements of that system. Canada suggested that the Senior Political Committee be appointed as the lead committee to oversee intelligence reform.

¶8. (C/Rel NATO) The Secretary General said that he had recently reconstituted the NATO Headquarters Intelligence Steering Committee (NHISC) which would have civilian and military co-chairs. He said the NHISC had been tasked to conduct an audit of the NATO intelligence system and draft a report with its results.

¶9. (C/REL NATO) UK PermRep Eldon said that until Allies knew where NATO was going with intelligence reform generally, it would be difficult to make specific recommendations for the Special Committee. He said that the NHISC might be a part of the solution to HQ intelligence reform, but expressed skepticism that a working group of insiders would be sufficient to conduct the reforms needed. He suggested that the Secretary General appoint an outside civilian "owner" who could look at the issue with "fresh eyes" and then make appropriate recommendations. The Italian PermRep, however, cautioned that there had already been a lot of talk in NATO recently about bringing in outside experts to fix one problem

or another. (Note: This was likely a reference to both the Strategic Concept Group of Experts and the recently agreed Senior Officials Group tasked with looking at resource issues.) He said that Rasmussen, who only took on the job of being Secretary General in August, was himself a "fresh pair of eyes." He encouraged further internal efforts to reform NATO intelligence processes before turning to an outside "intelligence czar."

¶10. (C/REL NATO) Ambassador Daalder agreed with those who said that the role of the Special Committee could not be divorced from the larger issue of NATO intelligence reform. He welcomed the reconstitution of the NHISC, but questioned whether it would not be better to have a single chair above both the civilian and military intelligence representatives. He added that perhaps this was a role the Deputy Secretary General could take on.

¶11. (C/REL NATO) Poland said that the Special Committee should maintain its important early warning role for the NAC, adding that the Alliance needed unfettered intelligence which was free from political interference.

Branciforte Responds

¶12. (C/REL NATO) In response, Branciforte said that the Special Committee was an important link for the NAC to the civilian intelligence services of member nations. Noting that the Special Committee was one of the oldest in NATO, he argued that it had not kept up with the changes that had taken place within the rest of the Alliance. He suggested that perhaps it was time to revise the Committee's Terms of Reference. (Note: The Committee's Terms of Reference were last revised in 1998.) He said that this was why the Committee was looking to guidance from the Council on what types of information and advice it should provide.

The Chinese Intelligence Threat

¶13. (S/REL NATO) A representative from the Canadian Security

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Intelligence Service briefed PermReps on a Special Committee assessment of the potential intelligence threat to NATO and its member nations from Chinese intelligence services. (Note: The report -- ref C -- is classified at the NATO Secret level. Those with appropriate NATO clearances may obtain a copy from their NATO registry or sub-registry.)
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